

[Mr. T. E. Moir]

[27th March 1928]

the greatest difficulty in dealing with a matter of this kind. Because, after all, while it is open to us—I am not referring to the proposal now before the House but to the Deputy President's speech—to say that these things ought not to be, the final decision does not rest with us to say that these things shall not be. It is for the communities which are intimately concerned with this question to say that these things shall not be. It may be that if some practical proposal on existing lines of advance were put before the House, we might have to say 'Well, here are many Members of this House who appeal to us for our aid in this matter, and we must seriously consider whether we shall give it.' That would be because we were considering some real practical proposals, something that had some chance of acceptance under the present social conditions in this country. Does any Member of this House think that if legislation to the effect that no boy shall marry before the age of 21, no girl before the age of 16, were put forward either here or in the Central Legislature to which such questions really belong, it would have any chance of acceptance?

1-30
p.m.

"Personally I can only regret that by the turn which this debate has taken we have really lost an opportunity of discussing and formulating our views by hearing arguments devoted to the real aspect of the question, arguments which would not have been confused or obscured by arguments drawn from an entirely different basis. I wish only to add that on consideration we on this bench have decided that as this is a matter of making a recommendation to the Government of India not one of legislation in this House, in which case circumstances would be different, we think that the only proper course is that such recommendation as this House desires to make on this matter should go forward as far as possible unaffected by official attitudes or views and that we ourselves do therefore propose not to take part in any division on this resolution should such a division take place."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"The question is that 'this Council recommends to the Government that they may be pleased to communicate to the Government of India that in the opinion of this Council legislation raising the marriageable age of boys and girls to at least 21 and 16 years respectively, is necessary.'"

The motion was put to the House and declared carried.

* The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"The House will now adjourn and meet again at 2-30 p.m."

After Lunch (2-30 p.m.)

Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR:—"Mr. President, Sir, I do not move the following resolution standing in my name—

'This Council recommends to the Government that facilities be provided for the proper irrigation of the lands under the ayacut of the Peria eri in Agili village, Madurantakam taluk, Chingleput district, and that the orders issued in G.O. Mis. No. 157 I., dated 20th January 1928, be reconsidered for the benefit of the ryot population.'"

The following resolution which stood in the name of Mr. C. Ramasomayajulu was deemed to have been withdrawn as the hon. Member was not in his place:—

'This Council recommends to the Government that no action be taken in furtherance of resettlement in East Godavari, West

27th March 1928]

Godavari and Kistna districts till the Land Revenue law is codified by means of a proper enactment vesting the power of settling the rates and fixing the land revenue in the Legislative Council."

The following resolution which stood in the name of K. Abdul Hye Sahib Bahadur was deemed to have been withdrawn as the hon. Member was not in his place :—

'This Council recommends to the Government that the principle of separate communal representations be extended on the analogy of the legislatures to all statutory bodies, such as the local boards, municipalities and the senates and due regard should be paid to this question at the time of amending the Local Boards Act.'

COMMITTEE TO ENQUIRE INTO THE ECONOMIC CONDITION IN
BELLARY DISTRICT

* Mr. R. NAGAN GOWDA :—"Mr. President, Sir, I wish to move the resolution that stands in my name, viz.,

'This Council recommends to the Government that a Committee be formed to enquire into the economic condition of agriculturists in Bellary district.'

"In so doing, I am particularly anxious that the condition of the agriculturists only at present be taken up for investigation in the district of Bellary. The House is aware that an enquiry into the condition of the cottage industries in the Bellary district and other districts in the Ceded districts has been ordered and that the enquiry is going on at present. . . ."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—"On a point of order, Sir. I do not see the hon. Minister for Agriculture here."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I think the hon. Member is aware that this subject is one of the hon. the Revenue Member's."

* Mr. R. NAGAN GOWDA :—"It is probably—I might say certainly—well known to the Members of this House that the condition of the agriculturists as a whole in the Presidency is not very good, especially their economic condition. It is a fact that the agriculturists are the one class of people who have to fight against more odds than any other section of people. This is true even in other parts of the world where conditions are much more favourable to them than they are in India. It is then no wonder that the agriculturists in the district of Bellary along with their fellow-workers in the Ceded districts are not solvent. It is a sad fact that the agriculturists do not make both ends meet.

"There are three groups of people who are involved in this occupation, firstly, landlords, secondly the owner-cultivators and thirdly tenant-cultivators. I may add also a fourth group of people, viz., the agricultural workers. I would not be saying anything surprising to this House when I state that three out of these four groups of people are most of the time insolvent. The cultivators whether they be owner-cultivators or tenant-cultivators are to a great extent indebted to sowcars. The labourers if they are not indebted much—to my knowledge they are—are almost economic slaves in one sense or other. This condition is the most regrettable when we consider